



CITY OF DURHAM | NORTH CAROLINA

April 20, 2015

TO: Thomas J. Bonfield, City Manager
THROUGH: Keith Chadwell, Deputy City Manager
FROM: Reginald J. Johnson, Director, Community Development
SUBJECT: Comments to Proposed Rezoning of Phases 2 and 3 of the Former Rolling Hills Site

City Council discussed the rezoning application for the former Rolling Hills site (Z1400034) at the April 9, 2015 work session. During the discussion, Council asked the Department and/or the applicant to respond to the following questions and/or comments.

Question/Comment #1 Parking Reduction: McCormack Baron Salazar, Inc. (MBS) is requesting a reduction from 2.0 to 1.2 spaces per unit on the Development Plan. Explain how this compares to Phase 1, how spaces are assigned in Phase 1, and how parking is enforced in Phase 1.

Response: Phase 1 (132 units) was rezoned to be within the Downtown Tier and the Downtown Design District, which has no minimum parking requirement. The Developer proposed 1 parking space per dwelling unit (132 spaces total) which does not include the approximate 25 on-street parking spaces available on both Chestnut and Memphis Streets. Currently 61 units are occupied with 41 vehicles being registered with the property management firm and allocated one space and access card each. 50 of the units are leased to individuals/households earning 60% or below the area median income with 33 registered vehicles. The remaining 8 vehicles are registered to the 11 market rate units. Each resident with a car is allocated one space in the parking lot closest to their unit. Each resident is given a remote key fob which activates the gate to the parking lot closest to their unit. If a resident has additional cars, they can be parked on Memphis or Chestnut Street. Parking is enforced by management via pro-active explanation of the parking policy to new residents and via security cameras and signage positioned throughout the property.

Additionally, while on street parking cannot be technically counted toward the ratio, it is important to note that these streets are newly created (Memphis, new Chestnut and new Beamon) and that parking on these new streets will primarily be used by residents and their visitors.

The parking reduction proposed for Phase 2 & 3 was requested based upon MBS general experience in other cities where many residents of their communities do not own vehicles. To further support this claim, MBS commissioned Ramey-Kemp to independently study other

projects/communities and determined if a parking reduction was valid. Based upon the results of the Ramey-Kemp study, reduction to 1.2 spaces per unit was deemed supportable based on the professional judgment of the transportation engineering firm, even though that number exceeds what MBS constructed in Phase 1. The submitted parking study was evaluated by staffs from the Planning and Transportation departments and was determined to be supportable as referenced in the zoning staff report pending before the Council.

Question/Comment #2 Bike/Pedestrian Committee Comments: How many of the comments is the Developer willing to address?

The Durham Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC) has reviewed the project and believes the project would better serve the needs of the community and the Durham Comprehensive Plan if the following items are included:

1. Add a text commitment on the development plan to provide wheelchair ramps and striped crosswalks on all legs of the intersection of Roxboro St, Lakewood Avenue, and the Mangum-Roxboro Connector, with approval from the City of Durham and NCDOT.

Response: In discussion with the City's Department of Transportation, their staff is in the early design stage of a plan that would include modification to wheelchair ramps, handicap accessibility, and the installation of pedestrian pushbuttons and countdown pedestrian signal indicators at Roxboro Street and the Lakewood/Mangum Connection. The plan would address BPAC concerns in reference to an increase in pedestrian traffic from the development effort. Upon approval in the FY 15/16 budget, construction of the modifications should begin before or during the installation of the phase 2 infrastructure.

2. Add a text commitment on the development plan to provide pedestrian signals on all corners of the intersection of Roxboro St, Lakewood Avenue, and the Mangum-Roxboro Connector, with approval from the City of Durham and NCDOT.

Response: See #1 above.

3. Add a text commitment to provide bike maintenance and repair station on the site for use by residents. An example of such a station is the Bike Fixtation.

Response: MBS will commit to the installation of the bike maintenance and repair station but believes that this topic will be better discussed during the review and site plan approval process. This will assist in bringing clarity to the location of the station on private versus public property.

4. Add a text commitment to provide a pedestrian refuge island on Roxboro Street to enable safer and more comfortable crossing of the street, with approval from the City of Durham and NCDOT. A potential location for such a crossing is near site entrance # 2.

Response: In consultation with the City of Durham Transportation Department, a refuge island located near the Beamon Street and S. Roxboro Street intersection would require

either the removal of the existing center-turn lane on S. Roxboro Street, or a widening of S. Roxboro Street. Transportation staff recommends that this is not an option at this time.

Question/Comment #3 Timing of Expedited Hearing: There was concern that City Council must approve this request or the schedule would be lost, thus it appears like this request is being brought-up at the “last minute”. Explain how this fits into the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency (NCHFA) schedule.

Response: A complete tax credit application to NCHFA is due on May 15, 2015 and requires the applicant to demonstrate site control and proper zoning to accommodate the proposed project. MBS worked backwards from May 15, 2015 and began working with City/County Planning staff in the 3Q/4Q of last year to start the rezoning procedure which they were informed the approval process could take 8 months. MBS concluded that without an expedited rezoning procedure, the May 15, 2015 deadline could be missed. The initial submittal date for the rezoning application was October 27, 2014, last resubmittal on January 16, 2015, and the public hearing before the Planning Commission on March 10, 2015.

Question/Comment #4 Number of Units: Maximum number of units is stated on the Development Plan but how many are intended to be constructed? Why are some properties only being partially re-zoned?

Response: All of the remaining Rolling Hills property (10.70-acres) is being re-zoned from PDR-5 to RU-M(D). However, only 6.6-acres will be developed by MBS during Phase 2. The remaining property will be available to the City for Phase 3 development.

The total number of units that can be developed on both Phase 2 and Phase 3 is 150 units. MBS will be developing 85 units in Phase 2 thus a maximum of 65 units can be developed in Phase 3. Of the 85 units to be developed in Phase 2, 58 units will be affordable to families earning 60% or below of the area median income.

The remaining 10.70-acres are not a single parcel, but a collection of smaller parcels. Four of those parcels straddle the line between the DD-S2 and future RU-M(D) districts, so technically the portions of those parcels that fall within the DD-S2 district do not need to be re-zoned.

C: Steve Medlin, Director, Planning
Mark Ahrendsen, Director, Transportation